

Report

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

■ 1.0 Site Description

Located along the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown St. Louis, Missouri, the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial is a 90-acre parkland in an urban setting. The park contains St. Louis' old courthouse and the Gateway Arch (see Figures 1 and 2). The Museum of Westward Expansion is located underground below the Arch and contains extensive artifact collections and an overview of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Figure 1. Jefferson Expansion Memorial



Jefferson National Expansion Memorial is a popular attraction for tourists, with a visitation level of four million people a year. During major events, such as Fair St. Louis, visitation to the site exceeds 600,000 persons in a week's time.

Although the park is located in downtown St. Louis, it is separated from the downtown core by Memorial Drive, a major roadway with high volumes of traffic. The arterial corridor effectively alienates the park from the rest of downtown for pedestrian traffic. In addition, Sullivan Boulevard, located between the park and the Mississippi River, is frequently shut down because of flooding, limiting access to the park.

There is a 1,300-stall public parking garage that serves the park. The garage is open to users other than visitors to the park, and many downtown workers use the ramp. There are no public roadways in the park and no bus parking. A tour bus drop-off area that serves the entire park is located at the Old Courthouse.

Figure 2. Model of Park Layout



■ 2.0 Existing ATS

There is a Metrolink Station at the north end of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial at Laclede's Landing. Metrolink is St. Louis' light rail transit system that runs from the airport through downtown and across the Mississippi River to Illinois. Metrolink runs from 5:00 a.m. to midnight daily, with a headway of 30 minutes. For special events at the park such as Fair St. Louis, extra trains are added.

There is no city bus service within several blocks of the park. In addition, there are no pedestrian overpass links to downtown St. Louis. There are plans for establishing a pedestrian connection between the park and the surrounding downtown area via overhead pedestrian bridges or lowering the grade of Memorial Drive for a pedestrian walkover.

■ 3.0 ATS Needs

Additional ATS needs identified include:

- The addition of city bus service to the park. This would allow visitors staying in the downtown area to take the city bus to the park instead of driving their car.
- The addition of tour bus parking. At present, there are no parking spaces for tour buses. Currently, tour buses have to drop off passengers at the Old Courthouse and park at a private pay lot to the north of the bridge.
- Establishment of a pedestrian link between the park and the central business district (above or below grade). The pedestrian connection would allow park visitors to walk to downtown attractions, such as Busch Stadium, as well as creating connections to downtown lodging. Alternatives discussed have included rebuilding Memorial Drive

at a lower elevation, so that an at-grade connection can be made between downtown and the park.

- Provide shuttle service from the parking garage to the Gateway Arch. This is the main route for most visitors to the Arch and is problematic because of the distance. Handicapped and elderly users are prohibited from using this route because of the length of pathway to the Arch. Shuttle service would provide access to handicapped users.
- Provide a skywalk link between the Metrolink Station and the Memorial's parking garage. This would provide an accessible link between the LRT station and the rest of the park.
- Provide shuttle service from outlying satellite parking lots to the park for special events. This would relieve parking congestion at the park.

■ 4.0 Basis of ATS Needs

Based on the needs of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, additional Alternative Transportation Systems (ATS) would have the following benefits:

- Allowing a cohesive connection between the downtown area of St. Louis and the park. The park and downtown would no longer be viewed as two separate entities, but rather a combined destination point and tourist attraction.
- Provide a key link to existing alternative transportation that already serves the park and surrounding areas. Linking to the Metrolink and to existing bus services would allow users more options for alternative transportation.
- Relieve congestion on peak times through the use of shuttle service to outlying satellite parking lots.
- Provide a better user experience to handicapped and elderly users of the park by providing shuttle service within the park.

■ 5.0 Bibliography

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. Internet site: <http://www.nps.gov/jefe/>. Information printed November, 1999.

■ 6.0 Persons Interviewed

Gary Easton, Superintendent, telephone interview, November 1999